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Theatre: the Art of Human Being. - Locating the cultural value of theatre in the Age of
Broadcast Media and a retrospective paper on the process leading towards the 2000 performance
Involving Eternity.

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Abstract.

This essay is concerned with the position of theatre as cultural commerce in the postmodern milieu of electronic broadcast media. It is the partial fulfillment of an MA degree in Theatre Making as studied from a performer's perspective. The other part of my final project was comprised by the 2000 performance of a play entitled Involving Eternity, a video of which is available through the Drama Department of the University of Cape Town. Thus the essay is a research document and ideological treatise supporting and grounding my recent work as a theatre maker and actor.

I begin by examining the position of theatre in relationship to popular culture and the newly emerging aesthetics of the electronic era. The dynamics that separate the theatre from new forms of popular culture are strongly defined and examined. It is my position that the theatre cannot compete on the same front as technological media and I set out the reasons why I believe this to be so. The gulf existing between live performance and Media culture constitutes a political and ideological gap in the climate of the emerging technocracy and so I go on to examine these two fields in closer detail.

My analysis of broadcast media is focused on how these new aesthetic modes can be said to be reforming social perceptions about reality and representation. I draw from the theories of Jean Baudrillard and Phillip Auslander to present the critical position, which post modern discourse offers regarding these notions. Ultimately I foreground the notion of simulation in contemporary aesthetics and the erosion of the phenomenological space.

My analysis of performance focuses on the emergence of the new ideologies of actor training ideology. These systems are best characterized by the work of the Odin Teatret and Jerzy Grotowski. My theory is that this work has created a framework in which the Theatre can return to contemporary culture by providing a counter discourse to the technological. A technology of the self.

Lastly by way of example I illustrate how this theoretical position influenced the practical work on my play Involving Eternity.

My conclusion is that theatre has lagged behind the development of postmodern aesthetics for far too long. Fortunately the field has been advanced by forward thinking visionaries who have concerned themselves first and foremost with practical methodologies which have proven their success on the stages of the world. If theatre makers take the example of these theorists to heart the theatre will enjoy a powerful position in the emerging aesthetics of the new millenium.

Introduction

As a performer and theatre maker as I am fascinated by the cultural significance of live theatrical performance in an era in which electronic broadcast media is fast becoming an almost universal fetish. My reference to the fetishization of media and technological broadcast systems is meant to be read as an erotic comparison, an allusion to popular culture's deep infatuation with all things 'state-of-the-art' and the simultaneous devaluing of aesthetic systems which foreground content and minimal media manipulation. The popular culture standpoint on such artworks is that they are somehow regressive i.e. unhip, crusty, or not cool. The by word of the era is innovation, this is generally understood in the entertainment industry as larger budgets and an ever increasing scale of electronically enhanced effects and techniques. Society at large has been seduced by the fast and furious pace of technical revolution in the entertainment industry leaving the advocates of theatre limping far behind like a pack of eunuchs at a Roman orgy. The media age is inevitable and appropriate, it is useful to the culture that it simulates and it is deeply satisfying. I do not in any sense wish to suggest that the theatre should attempt to supplant the mainstream, to even assume that such a thing could be possible would be silly. What I am suggesting is that it is possible that the theatre has been crowded out of dominant culture and into a liminal space in which forms of power and signification exist which are becoming increasingly difficult for mainstream culture to access.

The forms of power to which I refer are internal biological and psychic processes that are our genetic inheritance as human beings and mammals. These things are not compatible with current modes of discourse and it is impossible to refer to them without recourse to unpopular terminology such as 'energy' or 'magic'. In the sense to which I refer to these phenomena they are systems of integrated sensory apprehension which bypass empirical logic, these systems are as much part of human nature as the ability to think and have been part of civilized life all over the world. Perhaps these systems of apprehension are what have been referred to in the past as the spiritual nature of the human being or the soul. I borrow these terms from religious discourse yet intend for it to have resonance outside of metaphysical discourse as I believe it also to be a manifestation of the humanistic impulse. Those parts of us that are responsible for mythic experience are also identical to those that prompt political revolution and the scientific progress. They are forms of basic and complex intuitions about the nature of the universe and our own bodies which we have encoded into various cultural disciplines such as martial arts, prayer, dance disciplines, story

telling, and the various acting and performance disciplines of the world. These practices reveal the ability of human beings to consciously transform and manipulate their physical presence and psychological experience in complex ways that are inherent in our bodily structure and can exist independently or symbiotically to the parallel civilization of technology.

It is my theory that certain forms of live theatre provide a forum of counter discourse to electronic media because that they offer a self conscious and immediate commentary on the phenomenological status of both the performer and the audience. The fundamental reason for this occurring is that both the spectator and performer are active within the same space, this enforces an immediate comparison that occurs on both a mental and physical level. Not only does the audience decode the meaning or narrative of the performance, but also their bodies are drawn into a direct and empathetic critique of the bodies of the performers. Everything that occurs in the performance is laid bare to a simultaneous act of comparison and relative degrees of shared experience. An example of this could be the audiences automatic understanding of the physical strain of certain actions, or the sense of exhilaration which a particular performer is experiencing. This knowledge is not purely intellectual as a large portion of it is derived from the spectators own sense memory and physical memory. This is different to watching a similar sequence on television, because although visually the televisual medium is powerful it is problematic in terms of total mindbody empathy. The viewer engages directly with the visual spectacle and the myriad possibilities of exhilaration and pleasure which accompany this, however the experience is a disembodied and pre-edited one, an experience which is also fraught with simulation and electronic artifice. In contrast the theatrical experience is one of direct corporeal reality and consequence presented as a fiction.

The value of theatrical performance lies in the fact that it is a fiction, which occurs in the same objective space in which the non-fictional audience is located. In other words, the essential tools of the theatre maker are the bodies, which each member of the audience inhabits, represented by the actors, and the space in

which actual reality occurs. Theatre in this reading is a simulation that is real. It is also a simulation that can be created on a relative scale of complexity ranging from the bluntly primitive to the complexity of a visual spectacular such as Robert Wilson's CIVIL warS. The fact remains that fundamentally nothing is required to create the simulation of theatre other than human presence within the world that we inhabit. Contemporary theatre can happen anywhere and at any time, it is no longer bound to the auditorium or to fixed dictates of structure or style. The possibility of theatre surrounds us everywhere as Augusto Boal has shown with his Invisible Theatre; live performance can intrude into reality in a myriad of unexpected ways. Although framing devices such as stages, lights, video monitors, microphones and special effects can enhance a performance, none of these things are actually necessary and yet it is still possible to create a work that would equal the complexity and innovation of any technologically based medium. All current electronic media are bound by their framing devices, for example, terminals, screens, projectors, consoles, the device itself being a frame, the simulations produced by these mechanisms are quite obviously that - electronic reproductions and effects. Truly as we approach the vanishing point of computer simulation these techniques have become increasingly seamless, however they cannot intrude into the actual sphere of human reality without the support of their framing devices.

The theatre and live performance offers a rich field of phenomenological meaning in which the actual experience of being is translated directly into artifice and therefore becomes a powerful aesthetic mode. However, the popularity of the live theatre is rapidly fading in fact, some theorists are eager to pronounce the situation terminal, that theatre is a culturally oblique and archaic medium that has no place in the emerging century. Our present culture is one of immediacy, and in this respect televisual entertainment has made the theatre redundant, the single premise which theatre cannot forego is the presence of the live spectator and performer. Film and Television communicate directly to an audience which are not required to be present at the making of the object, which they are viewing, a live performance must be remade each time it is viewed. Thus only a limited number of viewers can view a live performance at any given time, whereas a televised or filmed event can be viewed simultaneously by as many people as have access to a screen, consider for example the number of viewers of the televised Australian Olympics. Therefore in terms of blunt economics the theatre has been marginalized. The value of theatre however lies in its

inherent resistance to the politics of commodity. Of course the theatre as an industry is something which must be packaged and sold as a product, and in the emerging economy of the new century everything must ultimately be reduced down to its constituent components of capital and information. Theatrical practice is still possible on certain fundamental levels possible to produce without capital, in this sense theatre is still conceivable as both a medium of mainstream society and also the disempowered and marginal communities of the world. I do not believe that the same can be said for broadcast media. However I believe that the very essence of the theatrical experience engages both the most basic and far-reaching implications of the human condition, the actual existing borders of human presence and sensory experience. It is these very borders which signify the final ethical and philosophical frontier of media manipulation but also constitute a vastly misunderstood and devalued territory. When the makers of theatre engage with these implications directly in the manufacturing of their art form, something of great value can be communicated between the viewers and the performers. This value will probably be impossible to convey summarily and without resort to terms well outside the admissible range of ideas permitted within academic and critical discourse, but -to coin a phrase- it will be more than your money's worth. I believe that the emergence of contemporary theatrical traditions based on highly complex training methodologies of both physical and mental technique has begun to provide this theatre for the new century.

Companies such as the Odin Teatret in Denmark, and the Butoh companies of Japan have embraced a physical theory which runs parallel to the emergence of the information age and in doing so has recorded the decline of the phenomenological space and recreated the theatre amongst its ruins. In the following essay I will attempt to describe the current social and ideological positioning of the theatre in relationship to the aesthetics of electronic broadcast media. I will then go on to explain my understanding of postmodern actor training and how it provides a meaningful counter discourse to media culture both in the manufacturing and reception of the theatrical object. Lastly I will by way of example discuss how these ideas informed the production of my 2000 play Involving Eternity.

Media Culture and the simulation of Popular Culture.

Media culture is becoming a virtually irresistible tool for commercial, political, and social dominance. Television, cinema, the popular music industry, magazines, internet, and advertising in all its myriad forms. These are examples of the cultural manifestations of the electronic age, the new forums for social and artistic debate. These media are also inextricably bound up with other forms of media that have less to do with entertainment and the transmission of culture, media that's primary function is the direct regulation of commercial and political information and power, the media that is used to regulate social order. Examples are surveillance equipment, telecommunications, satellites, and military technology. Thus it can be seen that the prerequisite of power- both commercial and political- is fast becoming synonymous with access too and understanding of these new media. Without access one must rely on those who do in order to obtain the type of representation which validates an individual or group in the current social situation i.e. news coverage. The question arises then, how does one obtain news coverage if one is not news worthy, this brings me to the question of capital and the new media.

The technical requirements of the new media are intrinsically bound up with problems of capital and commerce, consider the cost of financing a small budget film for example, or the cost of purchasing or hiring a single film camera. The new media are inseparable from an economy to which only a particular section of the population with a certain affluence have access, this also includes the kind of capital required for an education in these fields. Without access to this capital an individual or group is once more in the position relying on other's to provide the necessary access. The ideology of how this access is granted is once again controlled by those who regulate the maintenance of the dominant media and must ultimately support the capital that allows these systems to exist. In his book Behold, Metatron the Recording Angel, Saul Yurick provides an apocalyptic interpretation:

The components of telematics are mainframes, personal computers, cathode ray tubes, printers, copiers, automated bank teller machines, point of sale sensors antennae, copper and fibre optic wire copiers, remote sensing devices, robots... calculators, integrated chips, software, mass - data storage's, tapes, discs, diagnostic

equipment, a babble of "appropriate" languages, telephones, modems, telexes, terminals, microwaves, relays, radio, cable, satellites, switching and routing systems ... Alongside this one has to consider the social communication systems and all the transceiving and routing operations there. Even the simplest of conversations are separated reconfigured, sent and priced. And all those who live in this new world are losing their grip on an older reality. As for those who have no access to, no participation in, this newly imposed world, they are out of the world's new information economy, doomed to obsolescence and death.

(Yurick:1985:3)

In slightly less paranoid terms, what Yurick is referring to is the emergence of a new world paradigm which is constantly accelerating it's own growth in all aspects of human life. This paradigm is creating a need for world populations to consciously or unconsciously refigure perceptions and conventional means of value attribution. One of the more revolutionary concepts of this new paradigm is the emergence of computer enhanced simulation which can be used to accomplish a multitude of tasks once relying on the encumberments of human presence and labor. Virtually anything can be simulated; sounds, voices, landscapes, personalities, bodies, and textures.

The various means of electronic simulation i.e. computer graphics, motion capture, and artificial intelligence technologies are bringing us rapidly towards a point in history when the standard and acceptable notions of stable sensory verification and physical presence will be dismantled and redefined to accommodate the emerging technologies. The general assumptions which society uses to model it's structure and behavior according to can be said to no longer exist in any coherent or meaningful way having been usurped by media simulations and reproductions. Jean Baudrillard offers the most radical critique of this situation.

Jean Baudrillard is one of the most significant theorists of this condition and a leading figure in the formulation of postmodern discourse. Baudrillard believes that the emergence of the media age cannot be contested or resisted by any means that relies on an ontological basis of validity. In other words he deems that anything which pretends to stem from an objective and verifiable principle or absolute is irrelevant to the new world order. According to Baudrillard experience is made up of semiotic systems which give the illusion of possessing a referent which in fact does not exist. Thus all forms of communication are complex means of simulation that bear no objective relationship to the world around us and are merely conventions which enable social transactions i.e. 'Language is what prevents everything from meaning the same'. (Baudrillard: 1990:90). However, in Baudrillard's view, the new media have imposed a new linguistic framework over reality, a framework that extends beyond old restrictions of distance, time, and presence. Due to this illusionary transcendence of borders, the illusion of origin and perspective has been erased and reconstructed in the multiple and self-referential borders of televisual simulation. In her book Liminal Acts - A Critical Overview of Contemporary Performance and Theory, Susan Broadhurst writes:

Baudrillard grounds his thoughts in a historical sketch of the transition from modernity to Postmodernity. Modernity was the era of the primacy of the bourgeoisie, where production determined social life. Following the technological revolution production determined social life. Following the technological revolution, reproduction replaced production as the center of social life; and models, codes, simulacra, 'spectacles' and the 'hyperrealism' of simulation replaced the use - value of commodities, the forces of production, class struggle and therefore the hope of liberation through revolution. Baudrillard's universe of simulacra without referents in the traditional sense can be seen as a result of French post structuralism critiques of meaning and reference taken to their extremes, where the effluence of simulacra replaces the play of textually in a world with no stable structures or fixed meanings in which to anchor theory or politics...

Phenomena in the contemporary condition are themselves seen as effects generated

By the structural code, rather than interpreted in terms of structuralism; that is abstracts of a structure. Simulation is universalized both historically and socially, and implicitly in an historical process where each order of value is superseded and absorbed as illusion by the next. In Baudrillard's schema, the image draws increasingly away from reality until it bears no relation to reality whatsoever...[The] last development is where the image becomes postmodern and where production is superseded by simulation: 'every century throws the reality principle into question as it closes but it's over today, finished, done.'

(Broadhurst:1999:54 - 55).

From this position Baudrillard locates the broadcast and advertising media (inextricably linked) as the primary position of social regulation and control, this control is maintained via the absence of meaning or ideological reality replaced by multiplications of 'seductive' simulations which operate as placebo's. This process of inauthenticity has already begun to move into the phenomenological space with the advent of biological cloning. In Baudrillard's view the advent of the cloning process has invalidated human experience and interpretation, as it is now conceivable that human beings can be duplicated and/or manufactured according to the principle of supply and demand. A commercial process in which there is no visible source or center of authority has subsumed the entire experience of living. Baudrillard extends this viewpoint to include the nature of the human genome.

The most overtly visible area in which this process of simulation and reproduction takes place is the entertainment industry, each successive year providing a more virtual space than the last. Natalie Cole sings a virtual duet with her dead father Nat King Cole. Brandon Lee dies before the completion of The Crow and is replaced by a computer simulation, upcoming release Final Fantasy is proudly proclaimed to be the first totally computer animated super realist movie. Couples who have never met in the flesh engage in random and complex acts of online 'cybersex'. These changes to the global aesthetic model - largely dominated by the media and aesthetic trends of America- have been greeted by artistic communities variously as a

challenge, a provocation, a revelation, salvation, or the final death blow. The response of the theatre has been almost totally fatalistic.

Positioning theatre in a post-cultural culture.

Traditionally, the position of the theatre or live performance as such occupies the essential space of ritual practice, both secular and religious. For instance, the essential nucleus of both the Roman Catholic Church and the western court of law both rely on dynamics which depend on particular forms of performance. Both these examples have highly recognizable ritualistic structures which insist on the live presence of particular performers i.e. lawyers and priests in order for them to have social relevance to the wider scope of society. Also both of these performances can only be legitimized through the participation and 'passive' gaze of a live audience. The kind of performing that I am referring to are those actions performed outside of the arena of informal social communication and ordinary behavior and labor, what Danish theorist Eugenio Barba refers to as 'extra-daily behavior', this is contrasted against non - codified action which Barba refers to as 'daily behavior'. The implication of this equivalence is that all human life is performative and thus susceptible to the principles of scenic behavior. Barba explain that extra daily behavior is purely aesthetic in nature and are characterized by an exaggerated expenditure of energy which serves no practical purpose. The daily behavior function as a means to social, communicative, mechanical, and organic ends, they are based on the principle of minimal effort, maximum efficiency. (Barba: 16).

The two kinds of performance that I am contrasting could be characterized as ballroom dancing (extra-daily) and sexual intercourse (extra-daily), respectively. This example also offer's insight into how performance is used to regulate human behavior, institutionalizing heterosexual attraction in sets of physical conventions which constitute the vocabulary of ballroom dancing, the need for this ritualistic performance (within it's proper historical context) is preceded by the need to socialize the erotic impulse stemming from the desire for sexual intercourse. This is a secular example that involves a high degree of participation, in both clauses, and does not require the presence of an audience. Staying with the theme of eroticism, the catholic ceremony of matrimony is a religious and social performance which requires a larger audience and

a rehearsed script and structure. In this case the subject of the performance is the sanctification of the erotic impulse which hypothetically is presumed by all participants and observer's to exist between the bride and groom. After the performance has concluded the married pair has been empowered by the performance to consecrate their wedding by engaging in sexual intercourse.

To carry this example even further, Romeo and Juliet is an aesthetic work that carries various degrees of cultural capital in different socio - economic groups. In anglicized eurocentric cultures it is an exemplary canonical text, recognized as an essential romantic tragedy. Romeo and Juliet, as a theatre performance is a piece of fiction dramatized by specialists (actors) in a special space (the stage), it is a love story which incorporates erotic leitmotifs and a secret wedding all of which end in tragedy. The play though entirely fictional is presumed to be of high cultural significance because it reveals something essential about erotic love. This is a simplistic rendition of the permutations of performance in culture from the actual behavior, in this case sex, through its social and metaphysical manifestations, to its representation on the stage.

Before the advent of film, the theatre, as the arena of what Richard Shechner refers to as 'reconstructed behavior, was a central site of cultural transaction. It is recorded that the ancient Greeks would all political and commercial activity during the theatrical festival of Dionysia, the theatre in Elizabethan England was a cultural force which united the elite and the plebian, in Japan entire families devoted their collective destinies to the study of single roles. As such the world theatres occupied a powerful position of social, political, and spiritual power. The theatres of antiquity relied heavily on the phenomenon of community of community for their power, however simultaneously the participation of the community as such was automatic and imbedded within the structures of the drama itself. When I speak of community I am referring to the recognizable value attributed by tradition, law, religious dogma and superstition to the many levels and strata of a particular society. Every nation, due to it's own particular ethnic character, invents it's own unique social paradigm along which that group's social groups i.e. communities will be formed. With the advent of post modernism and the rapidly accelerating project of globalization the concept of community has undergone a radical shift, communities in the traditional sense have begun to shrink and become increasingly marginal. This has made way for the concept of the global community, in this sense

community is taken to indicate a mass of cultures and individuals connected to one another via various modes of electronic media and communication devices. This is a major stumbling block for contemporary theatre that has since antiquity relied on the power of cultural conventions to establish its semiotic language. As the signs and symbols, which constitute 'universal' group aesthetics, are eroded the theatre is gradually silenced.

The theatre has always relied on the older notions of community and cultural aesthetics. Take for example the Greek tragedies. This form of drama had an extremely important function within the wider community of democratic Greece; the drama was created and structured in such a way that truly embodied all of the notions that the average Greek citizen would recognize as endemic to his cultural reality. It was an acknowledged truth in classical Greece that the balance of the world was kept in check by supernatural powers that existed beyond the control of humanity. These powers shared many of the weaknesses recognizable in human nature i.e. lust, anger, jealousy, and thus were not beyond the scope of blame. Next in line were the aristocracy who were the closest cousins to the immortals, the kings and queens of classical Greece's veins still ran with the blood of heroes, but these heroes though noble and powerful, were perpetually at the mercy of their own passions and thus liable to make fatal mistakes with dreadful consequences for the rest of humanity. These plays were carefully structured along easily recognizable plots taken from mythology and reworked by dramatists to deliver incisive social commentary on the relevant issues of the times. In this way the theatre was a closed circle of meaning which recognized all participant both the performers and the audience as crucial components within a necessary social process.

At present there is a gulf dividing the theatre performer from his audience, it would almost seem that the modern day actor and audience member come from two separate worlds. Among most of the people that I associate with, the experience of live theatre has become something that is seldom if ever contemplated as a social or intellectual diversion, these self-same people attend the cinema on a regular basis. To me this indicates a major shift in the reception aesthetics of post - modern culture, the viewer has become retrained via the influence of electronic media to derive pleasure through the particular forms of narrative and

focalisation provided by the contemporary cinema and television, this contemporary aesthetic is in flux once again with the rapid introduction of interactive digital media. In terms of reception theory this means that the author of the cinematic and digital text is capable of implementing complex pleasure inducing devices which guide the viewers gaze and aid the construction of meaning in ways impossible without electronic intervention. Because this has rapidly become the defining characteristic of eurocentric global culture, everything outside of this paradigm is disregarded to the fringe.

If this is true then it may follow that due to the influence of cinema on the aesthetic of the aesthetic consciousness of society that the physical presence of the actor has become increasingly alien to the perceptive framework of culture consumers in general. Theatre seems to make a great many people that I know feel uncomfortable. All too often the audience finds itself confronted by actors in the process of attempting to bridge the 'Digital Divide' by emulating the paradigms and cultural baggage of cinematic convention on stage. What this seems to produce is an awkwardness in the performer's presence, a disassociation from the physical self that often reinforces the perception that the technological distance produced in cinema renders a level of finesse with which the archaic systems of theatre are unable to compete with. Philip Auslander writes:

The theatre, too has experienced this attenuated incursion of media technology.

The set for the 1995 Broadway revival of *How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying*, for example was "a wall composed of thirty-two projection cubes Showing a video of computer - generated three-dimensional images"[...]. In the theatre, as at the stadium, you are often watching television even when attending the live event, and audiences now expect live performance to resemble mediatized ones. The celebrated helicopter effect in *Miss Saigon*, to choose but one small example, represents a direct incorporation of cinematic or televisual realism into the theatre. As the theatre designer Wendall K. Harrington has said, "theatre-goers today have been raised on television. They have a cinematic vocabulary that one must deal with"[...]. This development lends credence to Patrice Pavis's

claim that the formation ... of audience's tastes by television necessarily rebounds on future audiences for theatre, particularly in the demand for realism"[...}.
(Auslander 1999: 25).

In his book Liveness , Auslander offer's an investigation and critique of the cultural significance of selected forms of live performance including theatre, stadium sports, rock and pop music concerts, and the American judicial system, within the contexts of what he refers to as mediatized culture. Auslander dismisses the very concept of live performance as a valid marker of what he refers to as 'cultural capital', and goes as far as to say that broadcast media have subsumed even what would appear to be a live event performed on an extremely small scale:

More intimate performances may not be mediatized in the same way or to the same effect. Inasmuch as mediatization is the cultural context in which live performances are now inevitably situated , however, its influence nevertheless pervades even those smaller-scaled events. I have already referred to the ubiquity of viding performance art, a phenomenon which speaks for itself. But mediatization is not just a question of the employment of media technology; it is also a matter of what might be called media epistemology. It "should not be understood as meaning simply that our world view is increasingly dominated by technical equipment. Even more important is the fact we often perceive reality only through the mediation of machines(microscope, telescope, television). These frameworks... preform our perception of the world"[...]. Even small scale, intimate live performances can be products of this preformed perception.
(Auslander.1999:32).

Auslander's position is radical and I find many of his conclusions opinionated and contrived, often his examples are overtly broad and in some cases almost ungrounded, however, his analysis is detailed and

provides a fascinating marker of the extremism which could characterize the marginalization of live events and phenomenological presence in the foreseeable future. One of the primary flaws in Auslander's critique is his position as voyeuristic outsider. Even though he has a solid grounding in many aspects of performance theory and genre he chooses to discuss what appears to me to be an extremely selective range of performance examples, these examples have mainly been chosen from the American theatre and music industries. He discusses these examples from an almost exclusively visual position and is fixated on the outer trappings of the performance event. The bias of his discourse assumes media performance and live performance to be virtually identical in construction and reception, only in his opinion media events are better suited to contemporary aesthetics. This position neglects the radical shifts that have taken place in theatrical acting since the 1960's.

New Ideologies in Actor Training Methods

The twentieth century brought about a revolution in the western understanding of what constitutes the training and craft of actors. This revolution was largely inspired through the encounters of European theatre-makers with classical Asian performance disciplines and aesthetics. For example the Noh and Kabuki styles of Japan, or the Kathakali dance theatre of India. This process began as an infatuation like desire to imitate the very aesthetic models imbedded in these cultural traditions, such as the codified gestural languages found in Balinese theatres, and then gradually evolving into a systematic inquiry into the very principles of performative presence and a revisioning of actor training.

From the 1920's to the present day, the results and evolution of this research can be traced in the diverse and interreferential works of Gerzy Grotowski, and Eugenio Barba. The work of Konstantine Stanislavski has also been crucial in the evolution of the new aesthetics of the actor. Although Stanislavski was not to my knowledge influenced by the acting tradition's of Asia, his systematic and pioneering inquiry into the actual processes of acting has been profoundly influential on the theatre and cinema of the twentieth century. In 1938 Antonin Artaud published his revolutionary book The Theatre and It's Double, this was the first of the

great treatises to challenge the accepted notions of how actors should be trained and the aesthetic which Artaud assumed would emerge as a natural product of this training process. The problem with this work was that it was extremely theoretical and poetic in nature and provided no practical methodology as to how to achieve the desired revolution of theatrical practices.

Within his lifetime, Artaud himself failed to achieve his lofty ideals in any of his theatrical productions. The Theatre and It's Double was extremely influential on the work of Jerzy Grotowski as he recount in his own seminal work, Towards a Poor Theatre. Grotowski's work was founded on fusion of the visionary mysticism of Artaud and the pragmatic insistence of Stanislavski on methodological exploration and the consistent honing of craft. This provided the springboard for the intensive and constantly evolving research which the polish theoretician and trainer undertook into the inner and outer processes of the actor. Eugenio Barba began his work as a theoretician while working as an assistant to Grotowski, but unforeseen circumstances forced him into separation from the Polish Theatre Laboratory to found his own Odin Teatret in Denmark. Barba also founded ISTA, the International School of Theatre Anthropology. Both the Late Jerzy Grotowski and Eugenio Barba, occasionally also working in collaboration, continued to develop their own unique yet related methodologies on the process of actor training and the resultant aesthetic forms. Gradually both men began to gravitate towards two different extremes of the theatrical experience. Grotowski gradually abandoned the theatre as a marker of cultural exchange and aesthetics to embark on a voyage of spiritual transmutation with a select group of highly trained performers dedicated to his notion of theatre as a vehicle of the soul. Barba on the other hand went on to create a transatlantic aesthetic which he identified as a floating and independent cultural environment in it's own right, a new culture of performance distilled from the intrinsic properties of theatricality as identified by ISTA.

The essential thread running throughout the work of these theoreticians is the insistence on the reunification of the actor's body and mind as the essential principle of contemporary training methods. Without exception, theatre innovators of the twentieth century point towards the separation which contemporary socialization has engendered between the intellectual capabilities and the physical anatomy. Grotowski writes:

I believe one must develop a special anatomy of the actor; for instance, find the bodies various centers of concentration for different ways of acting, seeking the areas of the body which the actor sometimes feels to be his sources of energy...

An essential factor in this process is the elaboration of a guiding reign for the form, the artificiality. The actor who accomplishes an act of self-penetration is setting out on a journey which is recorded Through various sound and gesture reflexes, formulating a sort of invitation to the spectator. But these signs must be articulated. Expressiveness is always connected with certain contradictions and discrepancies. Undisciplined self – penetration is no liberation, but is perceived as biological chaos.

(Grotowski. 1968:38.)

This notion is developed further in the training methodology of the Odin Teatret, Eric Exe Christoferson writes:

Training leads to a new form of behavior and a new way of being present.

The way of being in space, of standing, walking, seeing, sitting and jumping is recreated in a new way.

It is maintained by forces established in opposing directions, which means that actions are tension-filled ... even immobility is dynamic and not static because dramatic potential is present.

...

In the transition from one form of behavior to another, there occurs a breakdown of character structure(i.e. the social self). There is also a refusal of culture which

has created the original structure. The individual sets himself or herself outside of that culture.

(Christofferen: 1993:63)

Thus it would appear that the training of theatrical actors runs against the current trends of socialization. In fact it would seem that current forms of technology encourage an increased distance from the phenomenological space, and ever increasing recourses to technological means to achieving tasks and effects once accomplished through human labor and imagination. The theoretical insistence on the actor as a unified organic whole capable of unique levels of physical expression, becomes an increasingly compelling counter-discourse to the modernization process as global culture moves rapidly towards successively greater schisms of identity and physical presence. There are undeniable repercussions to the structure and transmission of human culture and the way we view and inhabit our bodies implicit in the emergence of the information age. The accessibility of technological systems is infiltrating every aspect of human endeavor and has forever changed the way in which we perceive and interact with the world around us. The impact of this can be clearly seen in the film, music, and visual arts industries in which practitioners must adapt to the new digital aesthetics and broadcast media or become redundant to consumer industry. Where exactly does this leave the body conscious craft of live theatre? As theoreticians of training and technique refine the craft of acting, do the results of this process render the actor increasingly archaic to the rapidly changing paradigm of global consciousness? Perhaps the new emphasis on the training of body and mind as a 'technology of the self', sharply differentiated from technocratic systems of mass entertainment will provide the springboard for theatre to enter into the new discourses.

The primary value of theatrical acting in the phenomenological space of each individual actor, this field can be enriched and expanded by the ideology of the actor's training, this will of course have a perceivable impact on the performance of the actor. As the actor is brought into a new and reconstructed sense of the phenomenological self so it logically follows that a greater degree of performative clarity can be reached. An actor trained in the Lee Strasbourg school of Method acting will have a complex and formalized

understanding to the mechanics of memory and emotive release as taught within this tradition and would, in a hypothetical formulation, be able to practice his art form with a fair degree of technical proficiency and intuitive sensitivity. Likewise a longstanding member of Grotowski's 1960's Polish Theatre Laboratory would be expected to deliver a richly detailed interpretation of a particular role, an interpretation which - according to the training ideology of the institute- should extend beyond the ordinary range of mundane representation but an essential sacrifice of the actor's essential self revealed through the total incorporation of voice, body, and spiritual nature.

Both of these training examples come from traditions that incorporate a specific philosophical motivation to achieve the goals of training. These philosophies are based on a psycho-physical understanding of what it constitutes the human being i.e. that the mind and body are essentially interconnected and that there are methods by which this connection can be strengthened thus benefiting both the actor's craft and spiritual well being. Both systems are founded on philosophies of 'truthfulness' in performance. Strasberg's method draws from an emotive truth that reproduces the effects of reality - thus theoretically resulting in realism. Grotowski's 'truth' seeks to realign the entire being of the actor into a unified whole which reveals a primal insight into human nature - interestingly Grotowski does not regard the performance emerging from this practice as unrealistic but rather as indicative what I would hazard to term proto-realism. Although stemming from a common root, the theoretical work of Konstantine Stanislavski, the methodology and performance of Strasberg's pupils and the actor's of the laboratory sharply contrast one another. This is because 'The Method' school of acting calls for a focus on the interior life of the actor and an almost Cartesian insistence on resisting action unless it is prompted by a clear psychological impulse motivated by authentic emotion. Grotowski on the other hand insists that his actor's explore the full potential of their physical selves as one and continuous with their spiritual being and to actualize this 'total act' in a state of highly disciplined vocal and gestural extremism.

These systems of working propose a unique work ethic in which the worker is consciously improving various aspects of his or her own self while performing the tasks at hand. The worker becomes the product of his own labor. The interesting thing about this process is that it occurs simultaneously on an interior and

thus relative plane and also on the empirical level of performance skill. The work of the actor could be seen as a form of conscious evolution of his or her total being.

Applying theory to practice: Involving Eternity.

The cast for the play was split into two main workgroups; these were broadly designated as the inside and outside show. The outside show constituted the member's of the fictive carnival referred to as the Midnight Road Show. The inside show was to be the core cast of the play and was made up of six actors chosen for their particular skill in the Drama school's movement program. They were to operate as both characters personifying the spirit world of the play and also as puppeteers and manipulators. Also included were an actress playing Rachel DeBeer the Afrikaner folk hero, and myself cast in the role of Adam - a missing person and performance persona taken from an earlier work of mine Waterbreek.

In addition to these clearly delineated workgroups was the actress playing the role of Lily, a woman from contemporary Cape Town who is searching for her missing lover Adam. The positioning of this actress in the training process was fluid and she moved from one workgroup to another as she was needed. She was unique in terms of the performance style of the play in that she alone was required to perform in a consistent "psychological realism" until the final scene of the play.

Due to the limited period of rehearsal time which I had at my disposal and my commitment to my own personal notion of actor training methods it followed as a logical conclusion that the rehearsal period should draw from the training program already in place. Within the theory of actor training methods that interests me, the ongoing training of the professional actor is a separate area of work to the rehearsal period. It is a time during which the actor is refining his or her physical craft in relation to the ideology of the company to

which he or she belongs. This should not be misconstrued to indicate the pure process of skill building, but also as self-development and creative exploration:

Training does not teach how to act, how to be clever, does not prepare one for creation.

Training is a process of self - definition, a process of self-discipline which manifests itself indissolubly through physical reactions. It is not the exercise itself that counts - for example bending or somersaults - but the individual's justification for his work, a justification which although banal or difficult to explain through words, is physiologically perceptible, evident to the observer. This approach, this personal justification decides the meaning of the training, the surpassing of the particular exercises which in reality, are stereotyped gymnastic movements.

(Barba, quoted in Christoffersen. 1993:73)

In this view of acting, the rehearsal process must be supported by a powerful underlying ideology which can be translated into a physical working methodology, also it is required that the performers have been working within this method for some period preceding the rehearsal process.

This is what prompted me to utilize my knowledge of Jenny Reznik's movement program. My interest in this part of the schools curriculum is in its three to four year long consistency and coherence. Reznik closely oversees the program in all its stages; she handles her pupil's development from the time they enter the program up until their final examination. Reznik's curriculum is based on a combination of personal style and her own tutelage in the training school of the late French theorist Jacques Lecoq. Through research into the methodology of Lecoq I have determined that Reznik has been extremely true to her original training and that her syllabus is markedly similar to that offered by her teacher. Lecoq's training program is based on the kind of ideological premise that I have mentioned earlier:

For Lecoq, knowledge comes about *through* movement so 'he attempts to return the mime to the precognitive state, freeing him to gather a new set of impressions in a neutralized state of naiveté. He works (via the neutral mask)

towards what he calls *mime de fond*, the 'gestural redering of the essence of reality'.

This reflects an Aurtaudian belief in the ability to discover a preverbal level, where,

After passing through the *silence de fond* - the first phase of work, Lecoq says, is about

Forgetting- one may begin: 'to find the gesture of the word, the actions for the verbs in the profound silence in which they were born.'

(Frost and Yarrow. Improvisation in Drama)

Thus the physical methodology which he coaches and of which Jenny Reznec is an exponent has a motivational core which is both supports and is supported through the results of the training. All pupils which pass through the school are trained in Reznec's system and it is one which I admire, therefore to continue the training /rehearsal process along the guidelines established in the movement program was a logical step. The process was modified though due to my own commitment to the work of Jerzy Grotowski and also my own methodology of theatre making.

The Midnight Roadshow:

Initially I approached the two separate workgroups as separate productions with their own performance ideologies and as such two very separate methods of work began to emerge from the training process. The outside show was planned around a carnival format, no script or structure existed for this section of the performance and it was my intention that both of these things should emerge from the performance itself that should be developed as a fully interactive event. The function of the Midnight Road show was to provide a disorientating point of entry for the audience into the fictional environment of the play. It was my intention that this disorientation should occur on both the immediate spatial situation of the audience and also in any of the narrative expectations that they might have. Thus the mood which I worked towards creating was chaotic, explosive and unpredictable. As my cast had no actual circus skills it was our job to train towards a style in which it would be acceptable to invent the circus environment purely in the audience's imagination.

The cast of the midnight road show's training was primarily in improvisation and physical comedy, also added to these acting workshops were sessions in design and the construction of lanterns and other props, which made each actor responsible for the realization of his or her own character within the overall production of the scene. Taking for granted that all performers involved had a foundational knowledge of the principles of the style in which I wanted to work, I set out to create a sort of imaginary mood or environment in which the characters would exist. The next step being an imagining of the kinds of physical behavior and group activity which might characterize this fictive community we were trying to establish. The essential performance principle underlying the scenic presence of the Midnight Road Show was that of a choral style collective, the challenge in achieving this was that I didn't want them to have any unity, rather they should appear as a multiply differentiated mass of single purpose.

I began to create the circus personae from the seed of another Jacques Lecoq technique introduced by Reznick and her husband Mark Fleishman; this is the principle of Buffoon work. I had first come into contact with this work three years previously in workshops hosted by the Magnet Theatre, an organization headed by Fleishman and Reznick, and had pursued it later in another Magnet production at the end of 1999 entitled Vlam 1.

The concept of the Buffoon is a satirical one; the buffoon is a creature that holds up a mirror to society, a mirror in which everything is fantastically revealed as a comical distortion. The buffoon character is a fantastical one that inverts expectations and is constructed without regard to physical or mental restrictions. Through a series of games and exercises the actor is encouraged to move away from the idea of a mainstream body of manners which does not break boundaries and to find new ways of behaving and moving in space. The actor is also encouraged to find an entirely new way of perceiving the world around him or her, an attitude of unblemished childlike wonder and surprise. The buffoons move in herds and processions, and live in a world of games and rituals. They are emissaries from another world and are not human in either appearance or manner. They are fascinated by human culture that they will mock and

deride at every given opportunity, they are most comfortable in a state of insanity and delirium but are also known to suddenly sprout wisdom in the midst of their bedlam. These ideas are supported by games and exercises in physical transformation and the performing group activities based on emerging hierarchies amongst the buffoons.

Thus the training is equally balanced between exercises in physical structure - plastique exercises in the terminology of Grotowski- and exercises in scenic composition i.e. improvised scenarios with clearly defined objectives. Plastique exercises are those which deal with the translation of the performers daily body into the extra daily body of the buffoon, shifts in ordinary balance and the deployment of tension across the bodies surfaces for example. These are exercises aimed toward creating a simulation of a new organic body out of a series of artificial conventions imposed on the performers physical self. Another example is the Buffoon character's compulsive need to touch it's fellow Buffoons, this touch is carried out with the same part of it's anatomy each time and is accompanied by a vocal gesture which denotes great pleasure. During the exercise that introduces this principle, the performers are encouraged to move as far as possible from conformity and cliché in the formation of the physical gesture, to truly create something outlandish.

During this phase of the work the performers work in gibberish and are not expected to create any form of dialogue or meaning, their work is to be read purely as physical comedy. During this phase of the work the performers are inducted into a new physical vocabulary and set of physical conventions which they will be able to draw from during improvisational situations which seek to determine group pattern behavior and task based scenes. This phase of work was coupled with a simultaneous reinvestigation of the physical principles of choral work as taught by Mark Fleishman. In this form of work, the performers strive to work in a synchronized physical unity. Thus the chorus is an undifferentiated social organism which offers a single minded vocal and physical commentary on the world inhabited by heroes and protagonists. The physical conventions through which this performance style is taught is derived from the work of Jacques Lecoq and is interwoven with his concept of the neutral mask and a reimagining of the classical greek theatre. The training for the choral work is concentrated around plastique exercises which strive towards producing stark gestural clarity and the expression of primal emotional states i.e. ecstasy, anguish, terror

while still retaining a group identity. Thus we worked towards combining two sharply contrasting training systems. These systems remained the source pool from which the cast drew its physical and performative resources; the carnival scenario and characters basically functioned as the textual framework on which the training would be hinged.

The carnival personas came were drawn from scenic improvisations in which the performer was required to change backwards and forwards between performer and observer at a carnival, each shift in function required that the performer adopt a new personality and carnival act. By doing this a vast reserve of possible characters was generated from which the performers could pick the character and act that they wanted to develop during the rehearsal process. From this point on we entered into a new phase of the work in which each character would now require a carnival function or act and dialogue in which to express itself. Here it was expected that each actor would begin to take a greater share of personal responsibility for the development of the work. The chosen character needed to be broken down and analysed as to what it's dramatic potential in the production was, what it's means of audience interaction would be, where the character would be situated in space, and what physical props that character might need. The initial scene in which these characters would be placed was one requiring a high degree of audience participation; thus the scope for improvisation was large. I wanted each character to have a reasonable amount of prepared routines and reliable stock behavior to draw from, much like the improvisations of the *commedia del arte* of the Italian Renaissance. Each performer was given a set of personalized tasks that would assist in the development of their character's unique performance style. I will use the example of the Gypsy Flower Seller

The character was conceived of as having a double-sided nature. She would approach customers in a sweet and gentle way offering to sell them a flower. If the customer accepted the flower she would charge a ridiculous amount of money forcing the customer to refuse. Once her offer was refused the Flower - Seller would go into a rage during which she would put an incredibly lengthy and elaborate curse on her customer and then walk off. The tasks set to the actress playing this role were as follows: 1) develop two clearly differentiated physical and vocal personalities for her character. 2) create a rhyme or song that her character

could use to advertise her wares while looking for a customer. 3) to create curses using elaborate gibberish extended physical gestures, and comic explanations of the effects that these curses would have upon their victim.

Within the guidelines set out by these tasks the actress was free to create the character according to whatever she had gained through the workshop period investigating the buffoon principles. Added to this she also decided that she wanted to perform the character as a stilt-walker, and thus spent a period of her rehearsal time training herself to use stilts, however finally this aspect of her training was dropped.

The Core Cast:

The training for the core cast was based closely on the theatrical theory of Jerzy Grotowski in his book Towards a Poor Theatre, the practical methodology was an amalgamation of Grotowski's exercises and those taught in Reznik's movement course. The central tenet of Grotowski's training system was that of *via negativa*. What this meant was that Grotowski's main objective was to reduce his actor instead of building him up. Grotowski believed that each actor, as a human being, had created a shell of social mechanisms and behavioral clichés that prevent each of us from being true to our own nature. The most tangible manifestation of this lack of integrity was in our physical inhibition and separation from our corporeal selves:

The education of an actor in our theatre is not a matter of teaching him something; we attempt to eliminate his organism's resistance to this psychic process. The result is a freedom from the time - lapse between inner impulse and outer reaction in such a way that that the impulse is already an outer reaction. Impulse and action are concurrent: the body vanishes, burns, and the spectator sees only a series of visible impulses. Ours then is a *via negativa* - not a collection of skills but an eradication of blocks.

Grotowski referred to this incarnation of his work as the holy theatre, and at this time strove towards an ecstatic transcendence rivaling the position which religion and mysticism once occupied in culture. Beyond the more grandiose imaginings of his theatre, Grotowski's methodology was simple, he strove to liberate each actor from the physical shell of social convention and to provide him with a reconstructed body capable of expressing his true nature. Grotowski wanted his actor to perceive that what he once thought of as impossible was in fact possible.

The initial phase of work with the core group was focused on this idea. I used a very basic form of the Grotowski exercises aimed at overcoming physical fear. These took the form of jumps and leaps of slowly increasing difficulty and other gymnastic routines. The practical reasoning behind this was that I wanted the core cast to have a larger than normal physical presence, an extraordinary quality of moving within the performance space. An extensive period of time was devoted to pure physical and mental exploration without direct connection to the performance we were supposed to be developing. The reason for this is that I no longer believe in the inherent meaning of the text in theatre but rather in the integrity of physical presence and the creative impulse underlying gesture. It was my theory during the process that if I could locate the essential ideas of my text in the actual bodies and physical process of my performers that I would come closer to directly engaging my audience in the performance. This premise springs directly from my interest in body centered phenomenological discourses such as I have previously mentioned.

The second phase of work began with the introduction of character into the process. Here just as in the work towards the outside performance it was my wish that each actor would develop an idiosyncratic physical vocabulary that could be drawn on during improvisatory exercises. Thus the developed character could be broken down to reveal a series of interlocking and artificial physical characteristics which possess an aesthetic logic relative to the character in the scene. The actor playing the character would then have at their disposal a self-created compositional model that could be used to guide their character's actions during the development of the text. For example, the actor playing the character of the Angel Jacob was instructed to begin by choosing a series of five animals based on the Grotowski exercises that focus on animal characteristics. Each animal was to be developed as a physical composition involving the entire voice and

body. The next phase of his work was to link a personal emotional experience to each animal and to find logical physical transitions between these emotional states that could then be translated into a physical score. This was carried further by inserting his neutral body between each transformation, and requesting that one of his extremities (i.e. Leg or arm) display the movement qualities of his next transformation. This work was established and perfected before the actual inner motivations and personality characteristics were given to the actor, in this way he was obliged to work only from his own inner emotional process for a substantial period of time. Once the actor's received information on the subtext of their character's a number of improvisatory sessions were established in which the physical gesture of the character had to be motivated by both circumstance and character subtext.

The actual physical process and simultaneous exploration was given priority to rehearsal. It is through this close attention to the detail of acting that produces something which is unique to the theatre, a tangible development of both the actors' craft and personae, can be developed and communicated to the audience.

The Audience

The original concept of the play was to take a very simple love story involving only two people and to explode it into a highly complex performance presented by a cast and crew of up to twenty people. The narrative was to be communicated by numerous media including installation, inter - active performance in the form of carnival, contact style physical theatre, and contemporary trip hop music performed live. The idea behind this was to remove the logical coherence of the story and transfer it into other forms which would lead the audience to construct meaning and the continuity of fictional time in less direct ways than through the Aristotelian concept of beginning, middle and end.

The initial starting point of the play were the various sets on which the play would be performed and how these spaces would occur as potential playing spaces and components of the story. I began planning these spaces as a series of interlocking dream segments. The experience of moving through these spaces was to approximate the experience of moving through a series of related yet sharply contrasting dreams in which

the dreamer still carries the residual memory from the previous dream into its successor. The key to this experience is the metaphor of the journey that is consistent throughout the course of the play.

Most theatre invites the audience to embark on a journey of sorts, a flight of the imagination during which the members of the audience are invited to suspend their disbelief and accept the conventions of the performance style as approximate to the laws of behavior and existence. Thus, while attending a performance of Romeo and Juliet, by William Shakespeare, the audience is invited to believe that within the particular world of the staging, which they are witnessing; it is natural for young lovers to communicate their emotions in iambic pentameter. This journey is often accomplished as simply as dimming the house lights and bringing up the first lights on the stage, thus directing the audience's attention from themselves to the world of artifice. In Involving Eternity, I wanted to complicate and concretize this process as much as I could. The reason for this was my preoccupation with the concept of phenomenology and the importance of live performance in an age of broadcast media. The notion was that the space in which the action occurs and through which the audience moves should be an unpredictable passage between a series of interlocking realities that shared crucial yet oblique relationships. The experience of moving through these spaces should be a translation of what it might be like to step out from the world of the everyday into the world of the play. In this way the audience has its own process, which corresponds to the actor's process of creating the play through rehearsal, a concrete phenomenological process.

The audience's process is the navigation of the playing space this journey will draw them, it is my intention, into a direct relationship to the material of the play in a non-confrontational manner. This journey occurs in five stages which each correspond to five separate points of view from which the action is observed from. These stages are: i) The Carnival ii) Adam's apartment iii) The Labyrinth iv) Adam's Private Desert v) Lily's Bedroom. The movements between these spaces become a physical realization of reception theory, which states that meaning is generated between the reader and the text.

The Carnival - The notion behind this section of the performance was to heighten the audience's sense of reality concerning the performance. The audience is thrust into the quad that has been transformed into a

carnival type atmosphere. There is no division between the performers and the audience, the carnival characters are free to approach the audience directly and draw them into their world of chaos and absurdity. The idea was that this would convey the feeling that the audience had come across an outdoor gypsy carnival on their way into the theatre, in this way the distinction between the fictional and everyday world begin to collapse. This concept is intensified by the inclusion of the character Lily in this scene; Lily is dressed in a manner that makes it impossible to distinguish her from the audience. Both Lily and the audience's appearance sharply contrast with the overtly theatrical costuming of the carnival. Lily's function is to approach individual audience members and show them missing person photographs of her lover Adam and explain to them that the last place she saw her missing lover was here at the carnival several months ago and to ask them whether or not they knew anything. At this point the audience is unaware that anything that they are seeing is of any significance to the development of the story, to the best of their knowledge they are immersed in chaos

Adam's Apartment - This was an installation work located in the first dressing room of the arena theatre. It was a cross between a twentieth century bachelor apartment and the dressing room for the 'star' of the play. The apartment had obviously been abandoned for quite some time and had been imbedded with visual and audio references to various aspects of the performance. The walls were decorated with working notes taken from my own journal concerning Involving Eternity, these included extracts from the script, costume designs, set designs, and schematic diagrams representing the development of plot. In amongst these notes were photographs of the character Adam with the character Lily and referring back to a time in their relationship before the disappearance. Various objects and material which would be included later in the action were also present, bonsai trees, rocks, a trail of sand leading out of the room and into the next installation, plastic animals, and the constant sound of wind. The one wall of the set was dominated by the dressing room mirror on which the character Lily had written messages in lipstick for her lover Adam wishing him success with his play.

The audience enters this space as a voyeur and potential investigator. They are free to move around the space freely and examine and interact with the installation in any way they want to. The space is a bedroom

and thus an intensely private space, some of the materials i.e. love letters and working notes refer to an intensely personal world existing between two people who they do not know. However, the audience is also aware that part of the narrative of the story is imbedded in the installation around them and so if they are not wary it is possible that they might miss some important detail. The trail of sand which dominates the set was also placed in such a way that if the audience wished to enter the space they would be forced to destroy it's arrangement. The audience is placed in a role of intrusion and violation, however if they wish to solve the riddle of the play they must proceed without caution. In my interpretation the audience become investigating officers in this scene.

In this scene of the play the environment is both the character and plot. The narrative is spacial and the only means by which the audience can obtain a coherent reading of the plot is to interact with it, to explore it and search beneath it's various layers, to expose it. My intention was that the audience should feel as if something is being hidden from them and in order to find it they must treat their surroundings like the scene of a crime.

From this space the audience members move freely and at their own discretion through a maze which links the installation to the main stage area. This is the most concrete aspect of the metaphor of the journey and as I have already stated is a concrete manifestation of the audiences suspension of disbelief. Having gathered their own exposition together each member of the audience moves through the labyrinth guided by the sound of a prerecorded monologue concerning the nature of love. Before they step from the labyrinth and onto the stage they pass by the sleeping form of Rachel DeBeer, an Afrikaner folk hero. If the audience has diligently noted everything which has occurred up until this point they would later realize that everything which takes place on the central stage has been referred too and echoed previously in the carnival and installation scenes. Thus the narrative swings forward and backward between the future and the past continuously bisecting the present moment of the play. The audience has been exposed to and interacted with all the elements of the set before actually seeing it: rocks, sand, and bonsai trees, the carnival which introduced the play and seemed to have little connection to the story turns out to resolve all the decisive issues of the action, and the figure of Rachel DeBeer haunts the stage. The audience steps out of

the labyrinth and into the full formed and now aesthetically coherent world of the play. This world is totally artificial yet justified in the audiences imagination by the journey which they have made themselves, a journey during which each of them have hopefully created a personal foundation for the world of Lily and Adam.

In a sense what I am seeking to achieve through this production is to return to the old ethic of theatre within a defined community value structure. This value structure in Involving Eternity is an artificial one constructed live for the audience through the dynamics of the spacial arrangements and narrative strategies of the plot. The value structure is generated by the audiences' direct involvement with the space and fiction with which they must interact. The performance is more an event occurring around the audience than an act that they are observing. This sense of community experience is hopefully accentuated by the process of community orientated training which the actors have undergone, a process of training heavily underscored with my interpretation of the value of theatre to the future of culture. The audience and actors collaborate on various levels both objective and abstract to construct the world in which the play occurs, if this process is successful both sections of the community will be effected on a deep level. The world created in this way will be received in an idiosyncratic and unpredictable way for each member of the process but this is part of the value of the experience. The only universal aim for me as an artist is to create a sense of consequence and total investment with the individuals I work with and for.

Conclusion

A significant portion of critical theory has become devoted to the emergence of the new social paradigms and aesthetic theories for the digital age. At this point it is still not possible to say with any certainty just how radical the reassessment of culture will be and with what speed it will continue to develop. All theorists can do is attempt to interpret the signposts of popular culture and science to outline the borders of their speculations. What is clear is that as we progress as a civilization, large sections of culture are

inevitably being disregarded to the margins and deemed obsolete and archaic. This has occurred in the labor industry, with certain traditional life styles i.e. the San and the American Indian, and also in the dominant cultures dismissal of religious doctrine. Increasing the non-technological space is not a valid space. I believe that this single mindedness is an unhealthy condition for our societies, for as we move rapidly into this new discourse we are turning our backs on the culture of our own bodies and their relationship to the living world around us. Technology has greatly improved the circumstances of the world and provided us with insights about our own bodies which would have been impossible before, however this technology has also reduced our understanding of the body to a mechanistic model which all too often we disassociate from.

At a glance theatre is obsolete as a contemporary aesthetic and practice, little more than a curious literary convention from bygone times. This is largely due to the theatres overall ability to maintain a constant stream of development with the rest of the art world. While the discourses of the artistic community have actively retrained the buyer and viewer in the reception of new aesthetics, the theatre and its theorists have insisted on clinging to reactionary terminology such as 'experimental' or 'avant-garde'. This terminology had its place in the modernist era of experimentation, the period of history preceding the post-modern, but in current usage they only serve to alienate the theatre from its audience. The experiments are over to a large degree, or at least for now, we need to start implementing the results.

The field of actor training and the results which can be seen to emerge from these systems is one of the few areas in which the theatre has remained managed to keep pace with the post modern world. These ideologies and practices should be adopted as the corner stones of the theatre and redefine modern perceptions of what actors are and how they go about their work. In a sense it is a return to the ancient past, to the training of the actors of classical Japan or the shaman actors of India, but simultaneously it is also a leap forward into the future because companies such as the Odin Teatret and The Laboratory Theatre have shown the potential power that theatre can have in the modern world.

This aesthetic will not have broad appeal at first, as I have noted previously it runs against the dominant trends in much of western socialisation, but it is an aesthetic which is extremely pertinent to society and its emerging practices. The theatre when seen in this capacity is no longer archaic but archeological, a repository of anthropological principles and practices which refer back to the ancient past and point towards the near future. In this capacity the theatre is also an extremely contemporary practice in which the fact of human existence can be shaped and reshaped as an act of conscious being, doing, and dreaming.

Involving Eternity.

Please note that this version of the script is a work in progress. The script should also not be mistaken as a blueprint of the performance, since in this particular case the script was derived from the live performance. The script is only included in this document to fulfil a course requirement and may well undergo numerous changes and revisions.

The Cast

Lily, a woman searching for her missing lover : Jade Allen.
Adam, a missing person and a lost memory : Thain Torres
Rachal de Beer, a child hero : Deanne de Wet

The Midnight Roadshow.

Dream Walker: **Carla Grauls**

Flower seller:	Libby Dougherty
Vampire:	Sean Webb
The Freak:	Daniel Judes
Belly Dancer:	Eve Shapiro

Pandora, an animal trainer:	Dianne Makings
Belinda, queen of games:	Nikki Froneman
The Eternal Elvis, master of games:	Adrian Coutts
Stilt Walker:	Charles Tertiens
Medicine Man:	Mark Elderkin
The Songstress:	Mandy Manson

The Inhabitants of the Desert

Ms Charity White:	Deidre Le Patourel
Granny:	Gahlia Phillips
Jacob the angel:	John Gamble
Memory:	Gary Naidoo
Death:	Nancy Rush

16K

Bryan Borchers - Drums
 Martin Meyer - Keyboards and Piano
 Brett Howell - Bass Guitar

Lyrics by Lauren Howden and Jade Allen.
 All the music played by 16K are original compositions.

Stage Crew

Ruth Loewenthal
 Thando Mthi
 Vivianne Lehanya

Directed by Anel Hamersma
 Designed and Conceived by Thain Torres.
 Puppet created by Reep Verloren van Themaat
 Installation 2 by Ferdi Dick
 Installation 1 by Thain Torres

Structure.

Act 1. The arena Courtyard. A night at the circus.
 Act 2: The arena dressing rooms. Moving between worlds
 Act 3: Main theatre space. Adam's Private desert.
 Act 4: Arena Theatre Courtyard. Lily's bedroom before the disappearance, or "How did we get here lover?"

The audience will be led to each space during the action. Please note that Act 1 is best experience through interaction with the entertainers.

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The Midnight Roadshow.

The audience attends a carnival. Here they witness dreams both absurd and profound. A woman named Lily wanders among them showing a photograph of Adam her lost lover, she explains that this was the last place that she saw him. Lily puts up missing person's posters.

Adam's apartment.

The audience wanders through an apartment. This place has been deserted for years. There are dust and cobwebs and plants grow through the floors. On the answering machine is an endless loop of messages, Lily searching for her lover. The audiences search the room for clues.

A labyrinth.

Lost in a maze the audience passes Rachel DeBeer on their way. They emerge into a new world and take their seats.

The Desert.

Adam asleep in an anthill, he is covered in old bones. Nearby Grandmother and Mortality are sleeping. Ms Charity white stands to one side speculating. Grandmother awakes in the midst of a coughing fit.

Grandmother: That was close. Always, always while I am sleeping, that's when she comes; Mortality sneaking up on me. Some call her the angel of death, aah but she's no Angel no, a girl with no respect for the elderly, that's more like it.

Ms Charity White: A very, very long time ago there was a young woman named Lily, and she was a princess. Princess Lily of the valley.

Grandmother: You are fast Lady Death but I am stubborn.... that's what my mother used to tell me, and she should know, after all she is the moon,(howls and chuckles to herself) ...And she would beam down at me all silver through the trees and say.....well , that's not a story for an early morning is it...

Ms CW: She was a princess even though she was forced by necessity to walk five city blocks every morning to a job in a nasty fluorescent lit cubicle. She was a secret princess you see. And she, Lily that is, was very pretty. Of course because she was so extraordinarily lovely she lived all alone. Plebeians are afraid of beauty; it makes them go all limp. (Throaty laugh).

Grandma: (coughing fit reaches for her fags) god bless Lexington.... It's going to be hot as hell today, my tits are all flat and saggy, always a sure sign.

Ms CW: Lily lived alone in a monstrous tower. A gargantuan urban edifice lodged at the center of a darksome and fear clogged city. That is where she lived.

Grandma: Time to go find Adam, my grandson. Look, here's his picture, an actor, he'll be on television any day now, either that or find a real job.

MsCW: Lily, shining like a lantern beneath a bushel. Shining out into the smog and rape infested night, shining, radiating out like the fucking pole star...ahem.... pardon me. Must be going now the others are waiting.

MsCW: moves towards where Jacob, Memory, and Mortality are gathering together.

Grandma: I'm taking him a present.... It's his favorite, an unexpected rainstorm in his private desert. I made it myself.

Movement sequence occurs between Mortality, Memory and Jacob. They argue over possession of the bone.

Memory: he looks so small from over here.

Charity white: do you think he's overslept?

Grandma: leave him alone darling, he's resting.

Jacob: wake up Adam.

Mortality: lets just get on with it.

Movement sequence resumes.

Charity white: Now where was I? Oh yes Lily sitting in her boudoir surrounded by her mirrors her special things and her books while the world sickened around her. She was waiting for her lover to arrive, the languid limbed boy, waiting for him to rescue her from the vomitous labyrinth the awful shitpile of the city. Where the fuck are you Adam?

Lily appears in a corner and makes a phonecall.

Lily: Lover.... where are you snake hipped boy? I am getting increasingly fed up with your perky little answering machine message. Are you avoiding me? I hope not. I wanted to apologize about our little argument at the circus the other night, but it's true Adam, lately you have been so withdrawn you're hardly there at all. I know that you are stresses about your play and all, but it's like you are withdrawing into a dream and you don't want me to follow, surely you understand that it hurts. Angel, just know this I believe in you more than you can imagine. Goodnight sweet lover, call me.

Exits

Spirits hover around the desert.

Grandmother: Jacob.

Jacob: where are you grandmother?

Grandmother: Everywhere sweetie, everywhere. Darling wind and spirit, rain and star give your brother

Adam a hand will you, he thinks he's gotten lost.

Jacob: silly boy.

Grandma: not everybody is as clever as you are darling. Oh, and Jacob, please be gentle with him.

Jacob awakens Adam

Adam: Life is a series of broken promises and the world I Knew is breaking into parts smaller than I can name nor number and I am running.

Jacob: you are running. Running in an endless world without horizons. Running beneath an endless sky that is eternity and running on this earth. Sometimes you will fall. You will stand and run again. Sometimes you will stop and rest and it is possible to rest your whole life. These things you will decide, but if you don't the world will decide them for you.

Lily enters and calls.

Lily: Adam it's been three days and it's not cool. You are going to listen to this and think that I am a total neurotic but I don't care. You can't go off somewhere and not call. These thoughts cross my mind, horrible images...you are so trusting of people and the majority of people are totally fucked up Adam. There are really sick people in this city Adam. They found this girl out in the flats last night Adam, and her nose and ears were cut off and she had been raped repeatedly and....I can't talk about this.... Call me Adam.

Exits

Adam: (looking out over the desert) there's nothing out there. Nothing.

Jacob: the way you could think is the sky. Blue for day after day after. Endless. And in your dreaming it is becoming a multitude of stars.

Adam: life is a series of unfulfilled promises. Expect nothing.

Jacob throws a bone at Adam who catches it. Adam becomes scared because he cannot see Jacob and tries to run. Jacob catches him and lifts him through the air. Adam is scared but cannot escape. Lily enters and makes a call.

Lily: I dreamt about you last night. I dreamt you just breezed in out of the blue. You looked so happy, so much surer of yourself. I was so relieved. I couldn't be angry and all those days of freaking out and trying to maintain control just melted and vanished. I felt like such a hag for over reacting (breaking).... I actually thought you were there for a second after I woke up. I could almost feel something of you left behind, a kiss against my cheek.... I keep telling myself if you were hurt or dead I would feel something.... I have to be able to sense something...Adam? Adam, I'm drunk.... I am.... First sign of trouble and I crack open a bottle of wine. I want another one round about now.

Exits

Jacob throws Adam down to the ground.

Grandmother: Jacob, I said to be gentle.

Jacob: But he won't listen Gran.

Gran: remember when you were children Jacob playing in the warm summer rain, I'm sure he will listen to that, watch.

Rain falls on the desert. Adam gratefully extends his arms to the sky becoming more of a child. He reverts fully to childhood.

Adam: Ma , kom kyk dit reen hier buite (sees the skeleton hand that Jacob is waving at him) Haai kom speel met my in die reen, dis so lekker, kom wees my maaitjie.

The rain stops and the hand no longer moves. Adam is alone in the desert. Lily enters the space and makes a phonecall.

Lily: Cape Town central. That's where I was today. Filling out a missing person's report for the only person that was actually present in my life. That building is the embodiment of everything that is wrong with this country with this fucked up city. Complete decay and negligence, no sense of order or comfort. Civilians and officers wandering around inside dark passages like ghosts. It's the dark that freaks me out the most about the place, most of the fluorescent lighting has failed and I just had this sense that it had been that way for been that way for maybe years. It's not a powerful sense of darkness, but a limping sort of half-sick lack. Cold shadowy stairs and abandoned rooms. These are rooms where people have died screaming

silently in murky spaces that smell of dust, of piss. There are these plaster walls painted white with holes in them and like these thin blue and red wires sticking out and peeling paint and horrible marks and dirt on everything, maybe you think I am getting hysterical but go and see dammed, it's like the fucking Blair witch project. It's vast and big and ugly and full of bad, bad, things. I was shaking all over and feeling weak. These days its like this constant threat looming out of everything, the radio, the TV, things that want to make you die or hurt or feel ashamed, things that want to take the one thing you love, the one precious person in your life and there is no protection from it. And all these hurtful things are inside the building as well, you could die inside that building, a hand could reach out from some cold and empty storage space, pulling you from the unlit corridor where nowhere will think to look until is much too late. So when I got to the third floor I was feeling weak and tired, I was thinking of all the things we used to do together, of a night down at eastern peer where you where singing and all those seals came out and I was thinking about times like that: moments that were so beautiful and pure and were filled with this resonant sense of promise, that same kind of promise that you feel when you are seven and you don't doubt your sense of happiness or reality and its pure but you don't even think like that because you don't comprehend the need for judgement, and I was thinking about all these things and then I'm looking around myself and the piles of rubble in the corner and the missing children's posters and the kind of response from the police that makes you want to scream out loud because its about life and life is sacred, its not paper work and glazed eyes and I realized that if I go past this point I have to change.....When I step through this door I cant think about life this way anymore, I have to accept it all –the flow of time, my flesh, my failures and that you aren't here and that everything that happened before was a delusion an exaggeration a stupid game, because there where I was standing in front of the door of the missing persons unit hearing this woman crying far away, right there where I was standing that is the center of the whole world, my world.

Exits

Adam is sleeping in the desert. Mortality and Memory enter and attempt to converse with him.

Mortality: Everything, each grain of sand, the sky, trees, god, shopping malls - the works, everything faces annihilation. utter oblivion. Death. That's me, some people call me eternal, it give's me something to look forward to. Personally I prefer the name Kate. This is my colleague Memory.

Memory: Because after all what is Death without somebody to remember.

Memory: you like to think about the end of the world don't you Adam?

Mortality: Remember the roadrunner cartoon? Remember when Coyote runs over the edge of the cliff, he keeps running in mid air for a while, then looks down and like there's this utterly profound moment where he just floats.

Memory: Here it is then, the end. A vast world. Boundless. Empty now and waiting to be filled with your ghosts. The excesses of the twentieth century, the ecstatic groping toward the pleasure principle. Cinema's, libraries, the street you grew up on, your first kiss, highways, agriculture. Unimaginable that it would all be sand one day. Grain upon grain. Innumerable.

Mortality: It's only after Coyote makes the mental connection that he succumbs to gravity and plummets.

Memory: Plummets?

Mortality: Plummets straight down into the gulch. See I'm trying to illustrate this huge nothingness that's.... Hmmm....incomprehensible really, but I think the coyote cartoon shows it best.

Memory: really?

Mortality: um...sort of. I'm not very good with words; maybe I should show you...only joking.

(They watch him for a second)

Mortality: I don't think he's listening.

Memory: aah humanity, it seems you are a series of broken promises after all, a narrow corridor that gives way to a progression of surprising and horrific turns,

Mortality: that's so morbid.

Memory: I thought you might like it... .

Mortality: see, dying is the only perfect thing in this universe. Your only certainty, and death is everywhere, under each rock and as far as the eye can see. What you are after see, is that coyote in the air moment. The moment before time closes over your head like a scab.

Memory: The twentieth century appears in my minds a remote region, set apart from the continuity of evolution. A sort of peninsula sticking out from the mainland, very thickly populated, very obscure and very far way.

Mortality: The thing with coyote is he doesn't get it. What's cool is that he was running on air. See? That's where the magic of life is...right under your silly feet...you don't realize it till you look down that you are like defying these awesome odds...the improbability of existence - cancer, heart attack, car accidents, skin eating viruses, murder, spontaneous combustion. And then you realize that each little step is a miracle.

Memory: this is not meant to sound judgmental. Your century is riddled with fault and blame, however as I move through your deserted history, your monuments to sensation and commerce I am left in awe.

Mortality: everyone has that special private moment with death, a taste of heaven or hell.

Memory: I am amazed by all these things because they seem to be motivated by one basic principle and promise, that you will not be alone. That you will live pleasurably and free, that passion will surround you in all its shapes, no matter how artificial, that somewhere someone is dreaming of you and waiting for you to fall into their arms. I have always thought of your century as a very romantic and dangerous place. But that's all over? Possibly time is not as linear as you have been led to believe.

Mortality: Everybody gets a close up with the reaper. Just remember I am nobody's cheap date.

Adam wakes up. Lily materializes as a lounge singer and croons a sad tune while the bones of the desert rise up into the air manipulated by the spirits. Adam plays as a child among the bones and begins to discover how they fit together. The bones become a skeleton and Lily vanishes.

Skeleton: Ek is Rachal, maar pappie noem my Raggie. Boet! Boet! My boetie het verdwaal in die winter sneeu. Ons het vir die beeste gaan soek, pappie het gese ons moet, hy het vir ons gese as ons nie terug met die beeste kom nie, dan moet ons maar liewers weg bly....pappie was baaie kwaad daai aand. Boet! Boet! Jy moet terug kom jy gaan in die sneeu verdwal.

Adam: Daar is niks mense of beeste hier nie, en dis mos die woestyn die, daar's niks sneeu nerens nie

Skeleton: wie 's dit? wie het dit gese?

Adam: Dit was ekke'

(Skeleton looks about)

Skeleton: wie?

Adam:Ek.

Skeleton:waar is jy?

Adam : ek is hier direk voor jou. Kan jy nie sien nie?

Skeleton: die sneeu het my verblind. Ek kan net jou stem hoor.

Adam; ag jy is simple meisiekind daar is niks sneeu nie, maar dalk is jy koud want jy het niks vel nie, en jy het niks oe, dit is mos hoekom jy nie kan sien nie.

Skeleton;Is jy my boetie,

Adam: ek weet nie. ek weet mos glad wie is ek eintlik, maar ek is bly dat ek nie allen is nie.

Skeleton: Kom naader.(touches face.)

Adam: Ek sal baaie bly wees as ek jou boetie was, want dan het ek vir altyd en ewig n speelmaat.

Skeleton: Ons moet in uit die sneeu uit kom. ons gaan verdwaal.

Adam ; ek het mos vir jou gese, dis die woestyn hierdie, daar is niks sneeu nie. Maar dalk kry jy koud want jy het niks vel nie, en jy het niks oe nie dis mos hoekom jy nie kan sien nie.

Skeleton: Kom nader.

They dance together until they get tired and lay down in the desert to sleep. The spirits cluster around them.

Ms Charity White: I don't think they're going to arrive.

The midnight Roadshow burst into the space laden down with their boxes, portmanteaus, and bags. It is obvious from their demeanor that they have been travelling for many days. Their bustling and noisy behavior is in direct contrast to the atmosphere of the theatre. They notice the spirits and present themselves in elaborate and flamboyant style.

Memory: you are late.

Belly dancer: frightful sorry about that darling.

The carnival explodes into life again around the audience as the midnight Roadshow begin to unpack their wares and equipment Manipulated by the spirits; the skeleton puppet awakens, disentangles herself from Adam and begins to explore the carnival. She encounters a medicine man who with the help of his two lovely assistants produce a bare of eye's for the Skeleton's empty eye sockets who is wonderstruck with the miracle of sight. She is soon overtaken with grief when she realizes how alarmingly different her appearance is too Adams. Two circus women approach her and offer to give he r the body of a real women. They communicate their offer through a series a lewd rhymes and gestures. They lead her into a magic device that transforms her into the young Rachel DeBeer who's sleeping form the audience passed in the maze. The queen of the circus sings a lullaby and Rachel takes her first breath. The members of the Midnight Roadshow cheer her and begin to pack up their bags. They exit in a huge parade, the spirits linger watching Rachel as she approaches the sleeping Adam, but they soon vanish following the circus. Rachel approaches Adam and somewhere a piano begins to play a slow melancholy tune.

Rachel: Ek is Rachal, maar pappie noem my Raggie. Boet! Boet! My boetie het verdwaal in die winter sneeu. Ons het vir die beeste gaan soek, pappie het gese ons moet, hy het vir ons gese as ons nie terug met die beeste kom nie, dan moet ons maar liewers weg bly....pappie was baaie kwaad daai aand. Boet! Boet! Jy moet terug kom jy gaan in die sneeu verdwal.

Shakes Adam awake.

Adam: (getting a big fright)haai bliksem!

Rachel falls to the floor and cowers.

Raggie, is dit jy? Haai maar jy lyk anders hoor. Maar nogal oulik met 'n bietjie vleis op jou.

They wave to each other in recognition.

Gee vir my jou hande Rachel.

He tries to help her up, but her body is rigid.

Sjoe Rachel, jy lyk stok styf vir my. Een, twee, drie, op is jy.

They look into each other's eyes.

Rachel: Jy is mos my boetie.

Adam: Rerig, hoe weet jy?

Rachel: Ek het mos oe: ek kan jou sien, en jy lyk soos 'n veloore seun vir my.

Adam: Ek is jou boetie, ek is!

In his excitement he knocks Rachel over accidently.

'n boetie moet vir sy sussie leer loop. Wag, ek help vir jou weer op. Dis maklik Raggie, jy moet net een voet voor die ander sit. Is jy gereed.....linker voet, regter voet.

Rachel: Dis moeilik.

Adam: Ons vat nou 'n ruskansie.

Rachel: Kyk boetie, daars 'n muurshoop.

Adam: Ja, dis reg. Kom ons moet weer loop, maar vinniger hierdie keer.....en links en regs en links...

Rachel learns to walk.

Kyk vir Rachel, kyk hoe mooi loop my sussie. Ek gaan vir jou nog baie dinge leer sus' ek gaan vir jou leer hoe om te spring, en te hardloop

Rachel: kyk Boetie.

Adam: Wats dit Raggie?

Rachel: Dis nog 'n muurshoop.

Adam: Ja.

Rachel: Boetie, dis nou tyd om huis toe te gaan. Almal wag vir ons. Hulle het vei my gestuur om jou te kom haal.

Adam: Wag. Waarheen gaan ons eintlik.

Rachel: Ons gaan nou huis toe, kom.

Adam: Wag Rachel daar's iets wat ek vir jou moet se.

Rachel: Wat?

Adam: Daar is niks mense wat wag nie, niks huis om terug toe te gaan, dis die woestyn die, daar is net sand en ons twee.

Rachel: Nee boetie daar is baaie mense wat vir ons wag, daar's mama en pappie,en..

Adam: Nee Rachel. Ons is alleen ons twee, maar ons sal gelukkig wees ek sweer, ek sal mos vir jou sorg.

Rachel: Nee boetie, ons moet huis toe gaan, hulle het vir my gestuur om jou te kom haal. Hulle wag vir ons.

Adam: Luister, daar is nersens waarheen ons kan gaan nie, daars niks mense nie, niks huise nie, net sand.

Rachel: Vir 'n Akteur het jy 'n baaie slegter verbeelding.

Adam: Is ek 'n akteur?

Rachel: Ja, maar nie 'n baaie gooie een nie.

Adam: Rachel kyk, ek sal vir jou 'n speeltjie leer. Al wat jy nodig het is 'n klip en baaie sand.

Rachel: Ek wil nie speel nie.

Adam: Ag Rachel, asseblief.

He teaches her to play hopscotch.

Rachel: Net een keer.

Adam: hier is 'n klip vir jou.

They play

Rachel: Dis nou tyd om huis toe te gaan.

Adam: Rachel, gee dit net tyd, jy sal sien ons twee gaan gelukkig wees, kyk.

A fish bowl descends representing a lake.

Adam: Ek het geweet ons gaan water vind.

Rachel: Dis so mooi.

Adam: En ons kan vissies vang. Kyk hoe waai die wind oor die golwe.

Rachel: Nee, dis nie reg nie.

Trees descend from the sky.

Adam: Ja Rachel. Eendag, as ons lank genoeg wag gaan daar 'n groot woud wees met hondrede op honederde boome. Kyk, hier is 'n wilde vye boom, ek gaan hom hier plant lanks die water waar hy groot en sterk kan word.

The game continues. It becomes more frantic as trees descend from the sky and plastic animals run across the stage. Adam tries to persuade Rachel that they are living in paradise, but she is terrified by his delusions. This becomes horrifically frantic. Lily materializes as the lounge singer. Snow begins to fall, and Rachel and Adam loose each other in the storm. Rachel eventually finds her brother and buries him in an anthill. She covers him in her clothes and climbs on top of him. Lily sings. Rachel freezes to death and her spirit leaves the stage accompanied by mortality. Lily goes to the phone and makes her final call.

Lily: Things just keep happening in the usual way. It's bizarre, maybe even scary what an intensely private person I am; I go to work, I function, I walk home I feed the cat. I take a walk past your apartment. I stare in at the windows and try to place your silhouette against the glass. I've taken over your rent – seems ridiculous to pay the rent for a place you might never return to...but it gives me a sense of you still being there.... Keeps you ghost alive. I told your landlady you had gone on tour with a play. I go to your place once a week to change the tape in the answering machine.... So that I can have something to talk to.

Sometimes I wonder if it isn't me who has disappeared and that maybe you are wandering the streets somewhere desperately shoving old photographs into strangers faces, longing for recognition and leaving messages on my machine in the middle of the night. Sometimes I go so far as to imagine a that I have invented you, that you are some perfect figment of my imagination.... But no, I don't think like that anymore, I try not to think too much. There are days coming, lots of them and I must rise and sleep and rise and walk these darkened streets and feel...yes, I must continue to feel...to feel these emotions and the simple beat of my heart and I must remember to breath. Goodnight, my Angel, dream of me.

The audience is lead outside where they watch a silent physical theatre scene enacting the past of lily and Adam. They observe how many of the plays visual themes are played out in this world of frustration and desire.

Curtain.

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